

Duxbury Clipper Dec. 31, 1981

The following article was sent in by Alice Badger, formerly of Duxbury who now lives in Quincy. The article probably appeared in the Old Colony Memorial since it was the only weekly paper in the area at the time.

The New Bridge Opened With Elaborate Exercises

A Great Convenience to the People of that Vicinity

The great Daniel Webster once said, as he looked from an elevation near his house in Marshfield, that there is no more beautiful beach on our coast than Duxbury beach, and as the great statesman was known to frequently brave the beach sand, through which he had to plow his way to enjoy the beautiful beach, we know that he believed what he said.

Duxbury people have believed it as well, but the town and beach were widely separated geographically, and to go from one to the other by land took nearly 8 miles of travel by a sandy road through Marshfield.

Duxbury began to be numbered among the noted summer resorts, but while the whole town is delightful as a place of summer residence, the summer folk cast longing eyes at the sand strip, and the townspeople became equally as earnest in the matter.

Here the great Daniel again came to the front and started a fund which was expended in filling in certain portions of the beach near the Humarock, which were in danger of being cut through by the sea. But the beach was as far from Duxbury as ever, and by Duxbury enterprise alone it has been wedded to the main land and the town by a new bridge, a scant half-mile in length, with the short approaches making up the deficiency.

The structure is built on piles, with a draw not far from the center, where the channel is situated. The cost was \$27,000, of which $\frac{1}{3}$ was assessed in Duxbury and the balance charged to the Gurnet Bridge Company, Plymouth and the county.

Last Saturday saw the bridge formally opened, and it was a gala day for the old town. Business was suspended, and a general holiday made for the people, who were out en masse to do honor to the occasion and participate in the exercises.

The special train from Boston, laden with former residents of the town, members of the Legislature and other invited guests, arrived at the North Depot at 10:30 o'clock, where they were met by Joseph Soule, commander, Mattakeesett Lodge, 110, 100F, Levi Simmons, Noble Grand; and the reception committee: Hon. Halsey Boardman, Hon. William Wright, J. Hollis, J. Parks and George Winsor.

The parade formed, and, under escort of the Plymouth band, marched from the station to St. George St. and Powder Point Ave. to the bridge. The residents along the route, and in other parts of the town, had their houses gaily dressed with bunting and banners of red, white and blue.

The crowd, which had been largely reinforced by the arrival of more of the people of the town and from other towns, gathered at the draw of the bridge, and

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William Wright called them to order. Rev. Mr. Dowse, chaplain of the Senate, offered prayer and Walter Faunce of the county commissioners presented the bridge to the Town of Duxbury with the following words:

"Mr. Chairman and Members of the Selectmen: Gurnet beach and Powder Point have lived near one another for a long time and, having arrived at years of maturity, have been united, and we are here today to celebrate the nuptials. What man has joined let not the elements put asunder. May you all live to see their silver wedding."

Joshua Swift, chairman of the selectmen, stepped from his place in the ranks of the Odd Fellows, and said:

"In behalf of the Town of Duxbury, I accept this noble structure, trusting the benefits to be derived from it will exceed the most sanguine expectations of its projectors."

Mrs. George Wright had been invited to open the bridge, but illness prevented, and her youngest daughter, Miss Florence Wright, a very pretty miss of about 18, was deputed to act in her stead.

At the conclusion of Mr. Swift's speech of acceptance, Miss Wright stepped to the southerly rail, holding a bottle of champagne, decorated with red, white and blue streamers. Saying, "In behalf of the citizens of Duxbury, I declare the bridge open." She gave the bottle a tap on the rail, sending the sparkling wine over the planks and into the saltwater below. The crowd gave 3 rousing cheers, which concluded the ceremony at the bridge.

The regatta was soon to start. All yachts under 25 feet water line, belonging in Plymouth County, were eligible. Three classes were started, at the firing of guns, and eagerly watched till they were well on their course. Rural sports followed and occupied the attention until after mid-day.

Meanwhile, Horace Glass of Duxbury, the prince of clam roasters, was engineering a big bake-off of succulent bivalves as the flats of Duxbury could furnish, and at 1 o'clock the Grand Army, Odd Fellows, and invited guests, headed by the Plymouth bank, marched to the marquee, where clams, corn, fish and all the trimmings were brought to the tables steaming hot. They were eagerly disposed of and the tables were kept filled by the hungry crowd, who came in as fast as the guests were done and had filed out.

At the conclusion of the dinner, the assemblage was again called to order by William Wright, who introduced Rev. E. J. V. Huiginn as toastmaster. Mr. Huiginn called on Hon. Elijah Morse, Hon. Halsey Boardman, Hon. Cyrus Bates of Cohasset, Arthur Lord, Esq., of Plymouth, and County Commissioner Tebediah Dwyer of Hanover. They each made a short speech, congratulatory to the Town of Duxbury on the completion of the bridge, and expressed hopes that it would add much to the growth and prosperity of the town. Governor Russell sent a letter of regret, which was read.

The speech-making closed the exercises of the day and the crowd formed a procession, which filed to the station, where the special train returned at 3:30 o'clock.

The celebration passed off without a jar. The guests were delighted with their entertainment and the townspeople had as much to be pleased with.

There were about 3,000 people at the celebration.

WHAT THE POET HATH SAID

The New Duxbury
Bridge Immortalized in
Verse -- 1892

Today we gather here
upon this ridge,
That overlooks the long
long talked of bridge;
And while our thoughts
revert to yonder beach,
Now brought within 10
minutes easy reach
By foot or horse
To pleasure seekers or to
men of toil,
Who gather ocean's
wealth to mix with soil,
Can this be loss?

Go ask your horses. Tell
me what they say
When drawing Ocean's
mosses day by day
Up through the sane,
beyond the breakers
reach,
Then wind, with heavy
load around the beach,
Then coming to this
bridge at close of day,
You ask them if its money
thrown away?
And every horse will surely
answer neigh.

Go watch your farmers
when some northeast
storm
Has strewn the beach
with treasure all along
When they have toiled all
day to build their pile.
Then coming to this
bridge methinks they'll
smile

And say, we are almost
home, how this is grand!
But hard it was, to make
them understand
That drawing kelp, and
rockweed through the
sand
Was not an easy way to
fertilize the land.

Some like to travel in the
beaten tracks
They think perhaps to
change might raise the
tax.
They'd sooner chop their

wood with battered axe.
Than buy a stone for fear
it might collapse.
But what is worst of all
they take no pride
In building up their town,
to stand beside
Their neighbors in im-
provements of the day,
Electric roads, deep
water in the bay,
Facilities for talking with
your friends,
On which a town's pro-
sperity depends;
For he who gets the news
an hour late,
Is way behind and out of
date.

We often hear it said, our
Plymouth friends
Think though the world is
large, they hold both ends
And every thing of note
must pass that way,
And that's the reason
why we see today
Their beach repaired,
their shallow harbor
dredged,
New railroads in con-
struction; wharves new
fledged,
Houses by dozens, rise
like Jonah's gourd,
While here in this old
town we can't afford
To have new houses,
scarcely one a year.
And what's the cause?
Why friends it's just as
clear
As nose upon your face
for in this town
Instead of crying up, they
cry it down.

And if a stranger comes
to pitch his tent
They gather round and
say, you will repent
The town is bankrupt, all
her soil is sand;
And he who settles here is
surely D---d.
But let me add, to close
these simple lines,
That if they ever hope for
better times,
For less taxation than
we've had before
Let every mother's son
along the shore
Hoist up his flag and nail
it to the mast;

And when he sees a
stranger sailing past,
Cry out to him though he
be on a raft,
To throw his line and we
will make him fast.
Then tell him that we
want him in our mess,

We want his money and
his strength, no less
To help us buy this town a
brand new dress,
And do away with all pig
headedness.